



U.S. Small Business Administration
Montana District Office
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Dear Friend of Small Business:

It's that time again and the U.S. Small Business Administration is asking for your assistance in finding and nominating candidates for the 2010 Small Business Week Awards. Each year small business owners and advocate champions from every state are recognized for their ingenuity, determination, success and contributions toward building a more prosperous future for our country.

You will notice some of the awards have changed, including elimination of the Small Business Journalist Champion of the Year and the addition of Community/Rural Lender of the Year. Please see the enclosed nomination guidelines for details on the nomination criteria for each award.

This past year, the Montana District Office has met with hundreds of small business owners and small business champions across the state. We know first-hand excellent candidates exist for each award and are we hope you'll take the initiative to recognize and support them with a nomination.

Your support is needed to make Small Business Week 2010 a success. Help us recognize some of the outstanding leaders and businesses making an impact in your community! Individuals who own and operate a small business are eligible for nomination as Small Business Person of the Year and several other entrepreneurial categories. **Nominees are *not* required to have received SBA assistance, except for the Entrepreneurial Success Award.** Individuals who support and champion small business are eligible to be nominated in various categories. A state-specific award will also be given to recognize the Small Business Community of the Year.

Any individual or organization such as professional and trade associations, business organizations, chambers of commerce, banks or a small business' employees, can make nominations. I urge you to identify nominees for these categories to help bring recognition to the outstanding small businesses and champions in your community.

National Small Business Week (SBW) will be celebrated in early May 2010 in Washington, D.C. and a Montana state event will follow to celebrate the winners of these awards.

Nomination guidelines, as well as required forms and helpful tips, are also available at SBA's website at <http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/mt/news/index.html>, or contact us at 10 W. 15th St. Suite 1100, Helena, MT 59626, (406) 441-1081. ***All nominations must be mailed or delivered to the Montana SBA office by November 13, 2009.***

Sincerely,

Michelle Johnston
District Director